

**CITY OF LODI  
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2005**

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, April 26, 2005, commencing at 7:02 a.m.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Present: Council Members – Hitchcock, Johnson, Mounce, and Mayor Beckman

Absent: Council Members – Hansen\*

Also Present: City Manager King, City Attorney Schwabauer, and Deputy City Clerk Perrin

\*NOTE: Council Member Hansen was absent due to his attendance at the Northern California Power Agency Federal Policy Conference in Washington D.C.

**B. TOPIC(S)**

**B-1 "Lodi Police Department's proposed Partner's Code Enforcement Assistance Project"**

Police Chief Adams reported that Community Improvement Manager Wood and Police Volunteer Supervisor Biskup have proposed a program that would assist the Community Development Department in issues relating to code enforcement. The Lodi Police Department has been very involved in community oriented policing, and this program falls in line with this philosophy.

Community Improvement Manager Wood reported that complaints are broken into five categories: substandard housing cases (25% of case load); dangerous buildings (2%); zoning complaints (20%); nuisance complaints, i.e. property maintenance ordinance, vehicle abatements, etc. (48%); and miscellaneous code enforcement issues (5%). Substandard housing and dangerous building cases require the most intensive work and because of the current caseload and staffing, they are the primary focus. The balance is addressed through an initial courtesy notice to property owners and/or tenants, which may result in 65% to 80% voluntary compliance. Staff responds to the complaining party and inspects to see whether or not the issue has been taken care of, which typically requires several phone calls. In many instances, there is no return response from the complaining party; therefore, those cases are either dropped or left open as unresolved.

The goal of this program is to reduce blight in the City through the assistance of the Partners volunteer program. It will also help to better identify nuisances that may in fact be health and safety issues. Often times, the reporting parties are not descriptive enough to convey the seriousness of the issue.

Police Volunteer Supervisor Biskup reported that Partners would provide compliance confirmation of nuisance cases using a compliance check form, to be completed by Community Improvement staff. Partners would perform visual checks of properties and clear them once they are cleaned up, as well as evaluate properties to ascertain if they have crossed the line from a nuisance to a safety issue. Partners will be equipped with cameras to take photos of non-compliance and safety issues and take the information back to Community Improvement for action, which will cut down on the turnover time. Code Enforcement Officers can evaluate the information from their offices, unless the photographs determine that further action is necessary. Partners will also distribute brochures addressing property maintenance and code enforcement issues and informing citizens about what constitutes a violation. Additionally, while on patrol, Partners will monitor vacant properties, boarded up homes, properties that are not maintained or have weeds and will report back to Code Enforcement. With Partners assistance, staff anticipates reducing 68% of Community Improvement's caseload.

The first step is to recruit teams of Partners and provide very specific, one-on-one training on compliance inspections. Next, at the monthly Partners meeting, staff will provide general code enforcement training to all of the Partners, so they can provide information to

the community and report on vacant properties for blight and illegal entry. It is anticipated that the program will officially begin on June 1, after which staff will evaluate the program by tracking nuisance compliance and clearance cases, identifying nuisance complaints that have elevated to safety issues, tracking the number of informational fliers distributed within the community, and logging the hours dedicated to the project.

Council Member Mounce stated that she is pleased with the proposed program and questioned if the brochure will be printed in different languages, to which Ms. Biskup replied in the affirmative. There is already a commitment to translate into Spanish and she is working with Crime Prevention to translate into other languages. Council Member Mounce requested that after staff's evaluation a report be given to Council on the impact of the program. She added that she does not want to see Partners put at risk and further suggested that the brochure be provided to new utility customers.

Ms. Biskup replied that the Partners volunteers will be provided adequate training, have contact with the Police Department should they need assistance, and will be trained on how to diffuse difficult situations. Their contact with the public will be minimal.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Hitchcock, Ms. Biskup explained that the compliance check form will include a detailed complaint description that is specific to the property. Ms. Hitchcock questioned if peeling paint is really a violation, to which Mr. Wood responded that it is a blight condition if it is visible from the street. Staff notifies property owners and provides them an extended time period to paint, taking into consideration their resources and weather conditions.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hitchcock requested that Police Chief Adams share his initial concerns about the program. Chief Adams explained that his primary concern was the safety of the Partners volunteers; however, he is satisfied that the program has been designed to address this issue.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Eileen St. Yves, speaking as the president of the Rental Property Association, offered to provide the Partners with its rental brochure to help renters and owners better understand their rights. She suggested that Partners not go into back yards, as it is unsafe. Ms. St. Yves commended staff for creating a good program.

Council Member Johnson stated that the program is an excellent idea, but questioned if it would create more work for the already limited staff and what will happen to the backlog.

Mr. Wood responded that this will not create new cases, but will help alleviate the existing case load. Partners volunteers will be provided with completed compliance check forms and will check existing cases, which is a drain on staff. Out of a sample of 100 cases, the 30% of unresolved cases could be cut in half with the assistance of the volunteers and would, therefore, reduce the volume that staff would need to complete.

In response to Council Member Mounce, Mr. Wood stated that the backlog in 1996 was approximately 200 cases; it is now 600+. Ms. Mounce conjectured that if the City took a survey regarding the property maintenance ordinance, 90% of the citizens would not know it exists. She believed the matter was mainly one of education and favored expediting the project.

**C. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**D. ADJOURNMENT**

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Perrin  
Deputy City Clerk

## PARTNERS' Code Enforcement Assistance Project

Lodi Police Department  
Community Improvement

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### Community Improvement Activities

- Substandard Housing - 25% of Caseload
  - Dangerous Buildings - 2% of Caseload
  - Zoning - 20% of Caseload
  - Nuisance - 48% of Caseload
  - Misc. - 5% of Caseload
- (Staff is currently responding to  
Substandard Housing & Dangerous Bldgs.)

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### Nuisance Complaints

- Are generated by a Reporting Party
- Receive a Courtesy Notice
- The Reporting Party is asked to follow-up to confirm compliance
- The Case is cleared if the Reporting Party provides confirmation
- All other cases remain open

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### Goal

- Reduce blight in the City through the assistance of the Partners Volunteer Program.
- Identify Safety Violations through information provided by Partners on Patrol.
- Enhance services provided by Community Improvement Personnel without increasing personnel costs.

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### Partners Assistance

- Provide compliance confirmation of Nuisance cases instead of relying on the Reporting Party.
- If not in compliance after notice - provide specific information and photos for Code Enforcement Officers to evaluate the case
- Distribute brochures addressing Property Maintenance and other Code Enforcement issues
- Monitor vacant properties for visual blight and possible illegal activity
- Partners Assistance will help clean 68% of caseload

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### Implementation

- Recruit teams of Partners to conduct compliance checks – Provide one on one training
- Provide general Code Enforcement training to all Partners on Patrol
- Train Patrol Partners to check and report vacant properties for blight and illegal entry

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### Target Dates

- Recruitment and training of Partner teams for compliance inspections to be done in May, 2005
- Partners on Patrol general Code Enforcement Training May 17, 2005
- Program will begin June 1, 2005

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### Evaluation of Project After 6 months

- Track Nuisance compliance and clearance of cases
- Identify Nuisance complaints that have been elevated to safety issues based on Partners information
- Track number of information flyers distributed and number of contacts made regarding Code Enforcement issues
- Log Volunteer hours dedicated to this project

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**CITY OF LODI - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
COMPLIANCE CHECK FORM**

**SUBJECT ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **APT/SU #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPLIANCE DEADLINE DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**COMPLAINT DESCRIPTION:**

1.      **Accumulation of high, dry weeds in front yard.**
2.      **Pile of boxes in driveway, stacked against garage door.**
3.      **Garbage containers are not being pulled in. Must be stored out of view except for Tuesday pick-ups.**
4.      **Paint is peeling on house and garage.**

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**DATE OF COMPLIANCE CHECK:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**STATUS:**

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**PHOTOS TAKEN:**      **Yes**                      **No**

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**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## HOW DO I REPORT A CODE ENFORCEMENT PROBLEM?

- Contact Community Improvement to report the Code Enforcement Violation.
  - Have the exact address of the violation and give a detailed description of what you are reporting.
  - You must provide your name and contact information to generate a complaint.
  - Personal information provided will be kept confidential.
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## WHAT DO I DO IF I RECEIVE A VIOLATION NOTICE?

- Read the specific violation(s) listed on the Notice provided.
- Each listed violation will include what needs to be done to correct the violation.
- If you have any questions contact the Inspector at 333-6823.

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT GOAL

The primary goal of the Community Improvement Division of the City of Lodi is to address the health, safety and welfare issues and to maintain a safe and livable environment for the community.

### ***COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONTACT NUMBERS***

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT  
(209)333-6823  
BUILDING DEPARTMENT  
(209)333-6714

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT**

Lodi City Hall  
221 W. Pine Street  
First Floor  
Lodi, CA 95240  
(209)333-6823

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

## UNDERSTANDING CODE ENFORCEMENT



COMMUNITY  
IMPROVEMENT  
Division

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(209)333-6823

# WHAT ARE MOST COMMON CODE VIOLATIONS?



Community Improvement handles enforcement of several local and State codes, ordinances and regulations. The following are the most common violations for residential properties:

## **Property Maintenance Ordinance**

Section 15.30 of the Lodi Municipal Code identifies the following conditions as violations.

1. Accumulations of dirt, litter or debris
2. Clothes lines or clothes hanging in front yards, or from porches, balconies, or windows. Clothes lines and clothes hanging in rear yards shall be permitted.
3. Accumulations of packing boxes, lumber, salvaged materials, fire wood, or similar materials in the front yard or visible from a public right of way.
4. Nuisances dangerous to children including abandoned, broken, or neglected equipment, machinery, refrigerators and freezers, hazardous or unmaintained pools, ponds and excavations.
5. Broken discarded or dilapidated furniture, household equipment, or furnishings, or shopping carts on the exterior of the front or side yards.
6. Overgrown vegetation likely to harbor rats, vermin or other nuisances dangerous to public health, safety and welfare, or obstructing a necessary view of drivers on public streets or private driveways.
7. Dead, diseased, decayed or hazardous trees, weeds or other vegetation constituting unsightly appearance, which is either dangerous to public health or safety, or detrimental to neighboring properties or property values.
8. Vehicle parts or other articles of personal property which are abandoned or left in a state of partial construction or repair.
9. Building which are abandoned, boarded up, partially destroyed, or left in a state of partial construction for an unreasonable period of time, and buildings which are unpainted or where the paint on the exterior of the building is mostly worn off.
10. Fences in a dilapidated, partially destroyed or deteriorated condition.

## **Yard Parking**

Parking vehicles on the grass, dirt or other unpaved yard surface is a violation of the Zoning Regulation

## **Inoperative or Abandoned**

### **Vehicles on Private Property**

- All vehicles parked on private property must be maintained in an operable condition or stored out of public view behind a solid fence or in a garage. This applies to wrecked or dismantled vehicles as well. The registration of a vehicle is not a concern in this matter.
- If a vehicle is not voluntarily removed, the City will tow the vehicle and must have the vehicle dismantled or destroyed. The vehicle can not be retrieved by the owner nor sold.

## **Uniform Building Code**

Doing building additions, alterations or repairs without a building permit is in violation of the Uniform Building Code. Examples may include adding a deck to your home, pouring a cement patio, installing a pool, or putting a new roof on your home.

Check with the Building Department before beginning a project to find out if a permit is required. Penalties may be incurred if work is done prior to securing a building permit at (209)333-6714